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Social development, including questions relating to the world social situation and to youth, ageing, disabled persons and the family

Report of the Third Committee

Rapporteur: Ms. Oksana **Boiko** (Ukraine)

I. Introduction

1. At its 19th plenary meeting, on 20 September 2002, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include in the agenda of its fifty-seventh session the item entitled "Social development, including questions relating to the world social situation and to youth, ageing, disabled persons and the family" and to allocate it to the Third Committee.

2. The Third Committee considered the item at its 7th to 11th, 19th and 22nd meetings, on 3, 4, 7, 8, 14 and 17 October 2002. At its 7th to 11th meetings, the Committee held a general discussion on item 98 jointly with items 97 and 99. An account of the Committee's discussion is contained in the relevant summary records (A/C.3/57/SR.7-11, 19 and 22).

3. For its consideration of the item, the Committee had before it the following documents:

(a) Relevant chapter of the report of the Economic and Social Council (A/57/3);[1]

(b) Report of the Secretary-General on the preparations for the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family in 2004 (A/57/139 and Corr.1);

(c) Report of the Secretary-General entitled "International Year of Volunteers: outcomes and future perspectives" (A/57/352);

[1] To be issued in *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 3* (A/57/3/Rev.1).

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(d) Note by the Secretary-General on the follow-up to the International Year of the Family in 2004, drawing attention to the report contained in document E/CN.5/2002/2 (A/57/67-E/2002/45);

(e) Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization on an international plan of action for the United Nations Literacy Decade (A/57/218 and Corr.1).

4. At the 7th meeting, on 3 October, the Director of the Division for Social Policy and Development of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs made an introductory statement (see A/C.3/57/SR.7).

II. Consideration of proposals

A. Draft resolution A/C.3/57/L.6

5. By its resolution 2002/6 of 24 July 2002, the Economic and Social Council recommended to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution entitled "Preparation for and observance of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family". The draft resolution was reproduced in document A/C.3/57/L.6.

6. At its 22nd meeting, on 17 October, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.3/57/L.6 without a vote (see para. 17 , draft resolution I).

B. Draft resolution A/C.3/57/L.12

7. At the 19th meeting, on 14 October, the representative of Senegal, on behalf of Angola, Algeria, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Austria, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Benin, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, the Central African Republic, Chile, Colombia, the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Denmark, Djibouti, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Gabon, the Gambia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Lebanon, Liberia, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, the Netherlands, Nigeria, Norway, Peru, Portugal, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Spain, Saint Lucia, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United Republic of Tanzania, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Promoting youth employment" (A/C.3/57/L.12). Subsequently, Belize, Bulgaria, Costa Rica, Cyprus, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Fiji, Guatemala, India, Jamaica, Malaysia, Nepal, Panama, Poland, Romania, San Marino, South Africa, Sri Lanka, the Sudan, Thailand, Venezuela and Zambia joined in sponsoring the draft resolution.

8. At the same meeting, the Secretary of the Committee read out corrections to the draft resolution.

9. Also at the same meeting, the representative of Egypt made a statement with regard to the draft resolution (see A/C.3/57/SR.19).

10. At the 22nd meeting, on 17 October, the representative of Senegal orally corrected draft resolution A/C.3/57/L.12, which was then adopted by the Committee, as orally corrected, without a vote (see para. 17, draft resolution II).

11. Prior to the adoption of the draft resolution, the representative of Egypt made a statement (see A/C.3/57/SR.22).

C. Draft resolution A/C.3/57/L.13 and Rev.1

12. At the 19th meeting, on 14 October, the representative of Mongolia, on behalf of Bangladesh, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, China, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, the Dominican Republic, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Lesotho, Liberia, Malawi, Malta, Mauritania, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Myanmar, Namibia, the Netherlands, Nigeria, Norway, Panama, the Philippines, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Spain, Sri Lanka, Saint Lucia, the Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey and Ukraine, introduced a draft resolution entitled "United Nations Literacy Decade: education for all" (A/C.3/57/L.13).

13. In introducing the draft resolution, the representative of Mongolia orally revised it as follows:

(a) New fifth and sixth preambular paragraphs were inserted, reading:

"*Affirming* that the realization of the right to education, especially for girls, contributes to the eradication of poverty,

"*Deeply concerned* about the persistence of the gender gap in education, which is reflected by the fact that nearly two thirds of the world's adult illiterates are women";

(b) Operative paragraph 5, which read:

"5. *Appeals* to all Governments and professional organizations to strengthen national and professional institutional systems of the education sector in their countries with a view to expanding capacity and promoting quality as a prerequisite for scaling up activities and administering increased financial support";

was replaced by the following paragraph:

"5. *Appeals* to all Governments and professional organizations to strengthen national and professional educational institutions in their countries with a view to expanding their capacity and promoting the quality of education";

(c) Operative paragraph 10, which read:

"10. *Decides*, in view of the importance of the successful implementation of the goals of the Decade, to include in the provisional

agenda of its fifty-ninth session an item entitled 'United Nations Literacy Decade: education for all'

was replaced by the following paragraph:

"10. *Decides* to include in the agenda of its fifty-ninth session, under the item entitled 'Social development, including questions relating to the world social situation and to youth, ageing, disabled persons and the family', a sub-item entitled 'United Nations Literacy Decade: education for all'."

14. At its 22nd meeting, on 17 October, the Committee had before it the revised text of the draft resolution (A/C.3/57/L.13/Rev.1), which Afghanistan, Algeria, Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Austria, Bhutan, Bolivia, Brazil, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, the Congo, Costa Rica, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Fiji, Finland, France, the Gambia, Guatemala, Guyana, Iceland, India, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Jamaica, Kenya, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mauritius, Mozambique, Nepal, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Switzerland, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia and Zimbabwe joined in sponsoring.

15. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.3/57/L.13/Rev.1 without a vote (see para. 17, draft resolution III).

D. Draft decision proposed by the Chairman

16. At its 22nd meeting, on 17 October, on the proposal of the Chairman, the Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that it take note of the report of the Secretary-General on the preparations for the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family in 2004 (A/57/139 and Corr.1) and the report of the Secretary-General entitled "International Year of Volunteers: outcomes and future perspectives" (A/57/352) (see para. 18).

III. Recommendations of the Third Committee

17. The Third Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolutions:

Draft resolution I
Preparation for and observance of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 44/82 of 8 December 1989, 46/92 of 16 December 1991, 47/237 of 20 September 1993, 50/142 of 21 December 1995, 52/81 of 12 December 1997, 54/124 of 17 December 1999 and 56/113 of 19 December 2001 concerning the proclamation, preparations for and observance of the International Year of the Family and its tenth anniversary,

Recognizing that the follow-up to the International Year of the Family is an integral part of the agenda and of the multi-year programme of work of the Commission for Social Development until 2004,

Noting that the family-related provisions of the outcomes of the United Nations summits and conferences of the 1990s and their follow-up processes continue to provide policy guidance on ways to strengthen family-centred components of policies and programmes as part of an integrated comprehensive approach to development,

Recalling that relevant United Nations instruments on human rights as well as relevant global plans and programmes of action call for the widest possible protection and assistance to be accorded to the family, bearing in mind that, in different cultural, political and social systems, various forms of the family exist,

Emphasizing that equality between women and men and respect for the human rights of all family members is essential to family well-being and to society at large, and noting the importance of reconciliation of work and family life,

Aware that families are affected by social and economic changes manifested as observable worldwide trends and that the causes and consequences of those trends concerning families have to be identified and analysed,

Recognizing the important role of non-governmental organizations, at both the local and national levels, working in the interest of families,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General on the preparations for the observance of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family in 2004,[2]

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General[2] and the recommendations contained therein;

2. *Reaffirms its invitation* to all States to take prompt action to establish national mechanisms, as appropriate, to prepare for, observe and follow up the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family, in particular for the purpose of planning, stimulating and harmonizing the activities of the governmental and non-governmental agencies and organizations concerned with the preparation for and observance of the tenth anniversary, and to cooperate with the Secretary-General in achieving the objectives of the tenth anniversary;

3. *Calls upon* all United Nations bodies, the specialized agencies, the regional commissions and the intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations concerned, in particular family-related organizations, to make every possible effort towards the implementation of the objectives of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family by integrating the family perspective into the planning and decision-making processes;

4. *Decides* that the major activities for the observance of the tenth anniversary should be concentrated at the local, national and regional levels and that the United Nations system should assist Governments in these efforts;

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[2] A/57/139 and Corr.1.

5. *Takes note* of the major study on the most important trends affecting families, to be submitted to the General Assembly at the commencement of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family in December 2003;

6. *Calls* for a concerted promotional, informational and media campaign on the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family at the national, regional and international levels;

7. *Invites* the Secretary-General to launch the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family early in December 2003;

8. *Decides* to devote one plenary meeting at its fifty-ninth session, in 2004, to the observance of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family, building upon the events to be held on 15 May 2004 on the occasion of the International Day of Families;

9. *Invites* the Secretary-General to continue to play an active role in facilitating international cooperation within the framework of the follow-up to the International Year of the Family, to facilitate the exchange of experience and information among Governments on effective policies and strategies, to facilitate technical assistance, with a focus on the least developed and developing countries, and to encourage the organization of subregional and interregional meetings and relevant research;

10. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session through the Commission for Social Development and the Economic and Social Council on the preparation for the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family at all levels.

Draft resolution II
Promoting youth employment

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming the resolve of heads of State and Government, as contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration,[3] to develop and implement strategies that give young people everywhere a real chance to find decent and productive work,

Recalling and reaffirming the commitments relating to youth employment made at the major United Nations conferences and summits since 1990 and their follow-up processes,

Recalling its resolution 54/120 of 17 December 1999, in which it took note with appreciation of the Lisbon Declaration on Youth Policies and Programmes adopted at the World Conference of Ministers Responsible for Youth in 1998,[4] which set forth important commitments regarding youth employment,

Recalling also its resolution 56/117 of 19 December 2001, in which, inter alia, it welcomed the Secretary-General's initiative to create a Youth Employment Network and invited him to continue with initiatives in that regard,

[3] See resolution 55/2.

[4] See WCMRY/1998/28, chap. I, resolution 1.

Recognizing that young people are an asset for sustainable economic growth and social development and expressing deep concern about the magnitude of youth unemployment and underemployment throughout the world and its profound implications for the future of our societies,

Recognizing also that Governments have a primary responsibility to educate young people and to create an enabling environment that will promote youth employment,

1. *Takes note* of the work of the High-level Panel of the Secretary-General's Youth Employment Network and its policy recommendations;[5]

2. *Encourages* Member States to prepare national reviews and action plans on youth employment and to involve youth organizations and young people in this process, taking into account, inter alia, the commitments made by Member States in this regard, in particular those included in the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond;[6]

3. *Invites*, within the context of the Youth Employment Network, the International Labour Organization, in collaboration with the Secretariat and the World Bank and other relevant specialized agencies, to assist and support, upon request, the efforts of Governments in the elaboration of national reviews and action plans, and to undertake a global analysis and evaluation of progress made in this regard;

4. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session on the implementation of the present resolution, including on the progress achieved by the Youth Employment Network.

Draft resolution III
United Nations Literacy Decade: education for all

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 56/116 of 19 December 2001, by which it proclaimed the ten-year period beginning on 1 January 2003 the United Nations Literacy Decade,

Also recalling the United Nations Millennium Declaration,[7] in which Member States resolved to ensure that, by the year 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling and that girls and boys will have equal access to all levels of education, which requires a renewed commitment to promote literacy for all,

Reaffirming that a basic education is crucial to nation-building, that literacy for all is at the heart of basic education for all and that creating literate environments and societies is essential for achieving the goals of eradicating poverty, reducing child mortality, curbing population growth, achieving gender equality and ensuring sustainable development, peace and democracy,

[5] See A/56/422.
[6] Resolution 50/81, annex.
[7] See resolution 55/2.

Convinced that literacy is crucial to the acquisition, by every child, youth and adult, of the essential life skills that enable them to address the challenges they can face in life, and represents an essential step in basic education, which is an indispensable means for effective participation in the societies and economies of the twenty-first century,

Affirming that the realization of the right to education, especially for girls, contributes to the eradication of poverty,

Deeply concerned about the persistence of the gender gap in education, which is reflected by the fact that nearly two thirds of the world's adult illiterates are women,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization on an international plan of action for the United Nations Literacy Decade;[8]

2. *Welcomes* the International Plan of Action for the United Nations Literacy Decade;

3. *Appeals* to all Governments to reinforce political will, mobilize adequate national resources, develop more inclusive policy-making environments and devise innovative strategies for reaching the poorest and most marginalized groups and for seeking alternative formal and non-formal approaches to learning with a view to achieving the goals of the Decade;

4. *Urges* all Governments to take the lead in coordinating the activities of the Decade at the national level, bringing all relevant national actors together in a sustained dialogue on policy formulation, implementation and evaluation of literacy efforts;

5. *Appeals* to all Governments and professional organizations to strengthen national and professional educational institutions in their countries with a view to expanding their capacity and promoting the quality of education;

6. *Appeals* to all Governments and to economic and financial organizations and institutions, both national and international, to lend greater financial and material support to the efforts to increase literacy and achieve the goals of education for all and those of the Decade, through, inter alia, the 20/20 initiative,[9] as appropriate;

7. *Invites* Member States, the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system, as well as relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, to intensify their efforts to effectively implement the International Plan of Action;

8. *Decides* that the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization should take a coordinating role in stimulating and catalysing the activities undertaken at the international level within the framework of the Decade in a manner that is complementary to and coordinated with the ongoing process of education for all;

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[8] See A/57/218 and Corr.1.

[9] See *Report of the World Summit for Social Development, Copenhagen, 6-12 March 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.8), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II, para. 88 (c).

9. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in cooperation with the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, to prepare a report on the implementation of the International Plan of Action for submission to the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session;

10. *Decides* to include in the agenda of its fifty-ninth session, under the item entitled "Social development, including questions relating to the world social situation and to youth, ageing, disabled persons and the family", a sub-item entitled "United Nations Literacy Decade: education for all".

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18. The Third Committee also recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft decision:

Reports submitted in connection with agenda item 98

The General Assembly takes note of the report of the Secretary-General on the preparations for the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family in 2004[10] and the report of the Secretary-General entitled "International Year of Volunteers: outcomes and future perspectives".[11]

[10] A/57/139 and Corr.1.

[11] A/57/352.